

Shaykh Rabî' Al-Madkhalî on Dividing the Scholars into the 'Harsh Group' and the 'Tolerant Group'

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Shaykh Rabî' b. Hâdî 'Umayr Al-Madkhalî – Allâh preserve and protect him – was asked the following question after a recent lecture he delivered in Masjid Al-Qiblatayn, Medinah.ⁱ

A novel way of putting people off the scholars has appeared, which is to categorize the scholars into those who are harsh and those who are lenient (tolerant), and sometimes [people who claim this] say the scholars of one region are harsh and those of another are tolerant. What is your guidance on this?

He replied, may Allâh preserve and protect him:

This is one of the methods of the enemies of the Salafi Manhaj. Amongst the Salaf there were those who were harsh and those who were lenient but they never used to hold it against each other. Rather, they used to respect those who were harsh against the followers of falsehood. You have [for example] Hammâd b. Salamah. Imâm Aḥmad used to praise him greatly and suspect the religion of anyone who spoke against him [saying] 'Whoever speaks against Hammâd b. Salamah, then suspect his religion because he was harsh against the People of Bid'ah.' Being harsh against the people of falsehood used to be a virtue according to the Salaf. But since the People of Bid'ah and misguidance have come and taken over the minds of many of the youth, very regrettably, being harsh against the people of falsehood has become a vice and a defect, and being relaxed and flexible [with them] has become a distinction and an honourable trait.

[You must] adhere to the Salafi Manhaj and take the Salafi position towards the People of Bid'ah. It is not wrong to call them to Allâh wisely and through good exhortation. If they respond, thanks and praise be to Allâh. If they do not, there is no wrong in being harsh against them and ... The Salaf were harsh against them, and [in some cases] ordered some of them to be executed ... [the Salaf] wrote many works [in refutation of them]. What do you say about them? Read *Al-Sharî'ah* of Al-Âjurri, read *Al-Sunnah* of 'Abdullah b. Aḥmad, read *Al-Sunnah* of Al-Khallâl. Those [who decry being harsh towards the people of falsehood] have not read these works, they have not read these works and seen the position taken by the Salaf towards the People of Bid'ah and deviation. What should our stance be towards the Jahmîyah, what should our stance be towards the Râfidah and what should our stance be towards their followers and supporters? Many who associate themselves with the Salafi Manhaj got influenced by these currents and became compromised and began to fight against the callers to truth and the Sunnah [by accusing them of being] harsh.

I have written [refutations] and I am the harshest one. I wrote during the time of Ibn Bâz, Al-Albânî and Al-'Uthaymîn. I refuted the Ikhwân Al-Muslimûn, (the Muslim Brotherhood) Al-Tablîgh (Tablighi Jamat) and all the People of Bid'ah and those scholars supported these writings and supported Rabî'. None of them opposed him and none of them said ... Al-Albânî

said a statement praising Rabīʿ, “[Shaykh Rabīʿ] is the bearer of the standard of Jarḥ and Taʿdīl in this era.” Hmm, what do you think about this? Then [Al-Albānī] said [But Rabīʿ] has some harshness in him. These compromisers rejoiced and flew with the quote [spreading it everywhere]. I contacted Shaykh Al-Albānī and said, “Why O Shaykh do you accuse me of being harsh?” He said, “By Allāh this is what I personally think.” I said, “O Shaykh, this harms the Salafi Daʿwah and it harms me.” So the Shaykh apologized – Allāh have mercy on him. Shortly afterwards, I sent him [my book] *Al-ʿAwāṣim mimmâ fī Kutub Sayed Qutb min Al-Qawāṣim*, which is the harshest book I have written. [Shaykh Al-Albānī] read it and supported it because it was the truth, and said, ‘You have spoken the truth, so continue and do even more O Shaykh Rabīʿ,’ or words to that effect, Allāh have mercy on him. Ibn Bâz never ... He used to say, “Refute the People of Bidʿah with wisdom and good exhortation.” He never used to oppose me, and by Allāh he wrote to me saying, “It has reached me that you have refuted Al-Mawdūdī – Allāh have mercy on him, and I hope you can send me a copy of this refutation.” He never used to object. Shaykh Al-Tuwayjirī used to refute and refute harshly the People of Bidʿah, and Shaykh Ibn Bâz used to support him and recommend his books. Hmm, he never once said – and [Shaykh Al-Tuwayjirī also] used to refute Al-Albānī – Allāh bless you ... Shaykh Ibn Bâz never silenced him, he would never say to him, ‘be silent,’ he would never say, ‘you are harsh,’ Allāh bless you. Al-Fawzân used to refute the People of Bidʿah during the time of Shaykh Ibn Bâz, and he never said, ‘be silent,’ Allāh bless you. Rather he would support him ... there are so many writings [Shaykh Ibn Bâz] recommended of Shaykh Al-Tuwayjirī and he praised my books and my methodology (manhaj), Allāh have mercy on him. All of these Mashâikh used to be supportive.

This is the manhaj in which we have become weak. We are not on the same level as we used to be during their time, rather we have become weak but despite this they say we are harsh, and they say Ibn Bâz [was not like you]. By Allāh, Ibn Bâz used to fight the People of Bidʿah and support those who fought them and praise those who fought them, Allāh bless you. Bring me one proof that Ibn Bâz silenced one person who refuted the People of Bidʿah. Did he silence Al-Fawzân? Did he silence Al-Tuwayjirī? Did he silence Rabīʿ? Did he silence Al-Albānī? Not one of them. Likewise, all the scholars used to support and aid those who speak the word of truth and refute what is wrong. [People] asked Shaykh Al-ʿUthaymîn, they said, ‘People say such-and-such about Shaykh Rabīʿ.’ He said, “This is because he clarifies the condition of their icons and leaders.” And he supported me time after time...

After Ibn Bâz, Al-ʿUthaymîn and Al-Albānī had gone, they said, ‘these [remaining Shaykhs] are harsh.’ By Allāh they lied, by Allāh they were only seizing the opportunity. The death of these scholars was an opportunity for them to pounce on the Salafi Manhaj and upon its followers, tearing them apart with principles and methodologies of the falsest and most corrupt kind. They tore apart the Salafi youth across the world and planted in their minds [this idea] that this group are harsh and extreme. How can this be...? The scholars never criticized [the scholars who used to refute.] How can we assert the Salafi manhaj [in this way] when [the scholars] were the harshest against the People of Bidʿah?

Either we reject the Manhaj of the Salaf and follow the People of Bidʿah or we say we are Salafis and we follow the path of [those Salaf] in taking the decisive and resolute positions towards the People of Bidʿah. Yes, call to Allāh with proofs and conclusive arguments,

explain and clarify; if there is a heretic in front of you, a Râfidî, Sûfî, grave-devotee, whatever. Call to Allâh with wisdom and good exhortation, and with proofs and conclusive arguments. But when we come to write about the beliefs of the Râfidah, amongst whom there is lying, sinfulness and extremism, we don't mention these things? We come to the Sûfis, amongst whom there is lying, sinfulness and extremism, but we don't mention these things? if you mention this lying and treachery and sinfulness they say you are harsh. A Sûfî, Ikhwânî ... Hizbî Tahîrî who transgresses, lies, betrays, who has ... Allâh has explained [...audio cuts off...] [The scholars of the Salaf used to say] 'So and so is a liar, he is like this and he is like that' Allâh bless you; they used to state it clearly. Look in the books of Jarh and Ta'dîl, in the books of 'Aqîdah, we cannot reach the level [the Salaf reached] in their Jihâd against the People of Bid'ah and Shirk. By Allâh we cannot reach that level now, why? Because now there stand against us those who associate themselves with the Salafi Manhaj [but] fight against this opposition [to the People of Bid'ah] and describe it as harshness.

We ask Allâh to unite the hearts, and I advise the youth – and by Allâh I have tens, rather, hundreds of advices to the Salafî youth on this – I advise them to unite together and be brothers to each other and employ the loftiest manners and behaviour when dealing with each other, Allâh bless you. They should employ patience, forbearance and wisdom. In my lessons, lectures and tele-links, in which they call me from every place, by Allâh I encourage them to come together. But these people who have stood in opposition to this Manhaj are the ones – by Allâh – who tear the Salafi youth apart across the world, in the East and West. They tear them apart and plant within them false beliefs, and then accuse *us* of causing schism. By Allâh I bring the youth together, and my books and recordings, which have been transcribed, all bear witness that I try to unite the youth.

In Algeria, Morocco, in Yemen, Shâm (Syria, Jordan), Palestine, in all places I try to unite the youth who I know to be Salafîs, I try to bring them together in every way I can, but they [the opponents to this manhaj] cause splits and division. Never is the voice of schism and division raised except that they support that sinful voice, Allâh bless you. We free ourselves in front of Allâh from what these people slander us with. I have already said to you, wisdom is indeed needed, but ... about the Râfidah, and People of Bid'ah, you clarify their condition, do not wrong them or lie about them, but explain the reality of their affair...

[Following the adhân]

Let me finish answering this question about 'harshness.' 'Abd Al-Rahmân was my colleague, 'Abd Al-Rahmân 'Abd Al-Khâliq was my colleague at the Islamic University until I graduated in 1384H. Due to some circumstances, he went to Kuwait. He used to call to Allâh and we used to encourage him and we used to be happy that he was active in da'wah to the Salafi Manhaj. But then he began to change, bit by bit he began to change. So I used to advise him; I would write to him with kind advice. He would come to Medinah and stay here in the area of Al-Qiblatayn ... I would take him with me in my car, dropping him off at the University, taking him to my house. I kept advising him and advising him, until the advice continued for around 12 years, Allâh bless you. I advised him until when he went beyond all bounds and started to attack the scholars and mock them etc. I refuted him.

After him came 'Adnân 'Ar'ûr. He claimed to follow Salafîyah but attacked the Salafî Manhaj saying the Salafî Manhaj didn't have real principles, Shaykh Ibn Bâz didn't lay down the principles but Sayed Qutb had the principles and such nonsense....[that] I should write about Sayed Qutb. I used to think better of Sayed Qutb, I would come across errors but pass them by, by Allâh there were errors about which I reserved judgement for 20 years, convinced that they were totally wrong, but wanting the sufficient evidence. After I was convinced that I should refute him I wrote *Matâ'in Sayed Qutb fî Ashâbi Rasûlillâh (The Attacks of Syed Qutb on the Companions of Allâh's Messenger)*. This book circulated, it was published and circulated.

'Adnân 'Ar'ûr went to Shaykh Al-Albânî asking about an unclear sentence in the book. [Despite] Sayed Qutb's [derision] of the Messenger of Allâh Mûsâ – upon him be peace and blessings, his attacks on the Companions, principally 'Uthmân, Mu'âwiyah and 'Amr b. Al-Âs, his attack on the entire Ummah and his takfîr of it, his negation of the attributes [of Allâh], his assertion of the eternal nature of the soul and his support of socialism – endless deviation that I explained in this book [and] in *Shedding the Islamic Light on the Creed of Syed Qutb*, ['Ar'ûr] took my book and ran off to Shaykh Al-Albânî to ask him about a sentence, and the Shaykh gave an answer that suited ['Adnân's] desires. The Shaykh hadn't seen the contents. Look at his conniving; [in this book] I started by explaining [Qutb's] disparagement of the Prophet of Allâh Mûsâ – he never mentioned that. Secondly I mentioned his disparagement of the Companions, principally 'Uthmân: [Qutb asserted that] the foundations of Islam were shattered in his time, the spirit of Islam was destroyed in his time, [Qutb] supported movements like the Saba'îyah sect against 'Uthmân and preferred them to his way – Allâh be pleased with him. Allâh bless you. ['Ar'ûr] mentioned none of these matters, he mentioned one sentence and Al-Albânî responded in a way that agreed to ['Ar'ûr's] desires ... He went and spread the tape and was extremely active [against me]....I was patient over him.

Then one year, he visited me in a group of people. I told him he had to apologize, and he tried to dodge the issue. I told him he had to apologize and those present also told him he had to, so he promised he would. Allâh bless you, he promised he would. .. I suddenly found that he had authored three books, *The Struggle* ...such-and-such book and another title, all of which revolved around the principles of Syed Qutb and praising Sayed Qutb. This was his apology. See, when he had reached this stage Allâh bless you – on top of this he held a conference in which he spoke about the issue of Al-Jarh wa Al-Ta'dîl, along with some others – I do not wish to name them now – he started a fierce campaign against me, so I began to refute him. After how long was this? After a number of years, after a long period of patience and waiting. By Allâh, I do not think anyone has patience like I do.

After him came Abul-Hasan. From the first sitting in which I met him ... he would defend the People of Bid'ah, at the head of who were Sayed Qutb, Al-Tablîgh and Al-Ikhwân, he would defend them [...audio cuts off...] Despite all these crimes, I used to treat him with compassion and I would send him responses by Allâh privately from my fax to his, and I would not tell anyone. Then, Allâh bless you, he continued causing trials and problems until the scholars passed away. Shaykh Ibn Bâz died, Shaykh Al-'Uthaymîn and Al-Albânî died and

[Abul-Hasan] began to wage war, announcing his splitting away and attacking the Salafīs [calling them] pathetic and feeble etc., praising the people of falsehood, Allāh bless you.

I wrote to him with two advices, *Tanbīh Abil-Hasan* and ... I wrote the second advice between me and him but he took it and announced war openly against me. Look, do you understand? Do you understand this? No one is as this patient or forbearing. By Allāh all of this was for the sake of the Salafi Manhaj and for the sake of unity. But they have been planted to cause division and separation. That was it. Abul-Hasan formed his own sect; one in Medinah, one in Yemen, in Libya, in Morocco, everywhere, Allāh bless you. All based on his manhaj and principles, around 20 principles. I refuted these principles with conclusive arguments and proofs. Twenty principles including: *the broad manhaj*, meaning he wanted a broad manhaj that included Ahl Al-Sunnah and the rest of the Ummah in it; 'we correct [mistakes] but we do not destroy', 'we correct but we do not disparage others,' Allāh bless you. Principles like 'I am not required [to take the warning or ruling of a particular scholar].'
All these principles were laid down for the purpose of rejecting the truth; principles for striking at the Salafī Manhaj, Allāh bless you. I refuted these false and corrupt principles. Allāh bless you.

Sadly, people in every place were duped by him. Before this, Allāh bless you, during the days of those scholars, when 'Adnān appeared during the lifetime of Shaykh Ibn 'Uthaymīn, the scholars declared that ['Adnān] was astray (deviant). Twelve scholars struck him down and explained his deviation. He discarded them all. Only Abul-Hasan and 'Alī Hasan Abd Al-Hamīd (Al-Halabī) from Shām remained with him, defending him and judging him to still be following Salafīyah, until this very day. Abul-Hasan came with these principles of his and this sinfulness and these deviations, and there were in Medinah, in Shām and in every place, certain people who would defend him, until this very day.

Then came 'Alī Hasan (Al-Halabī) with the calamity of calamities, aiding them in every fitnah. He came with the calamity of calamities. Perhaps [the news of his calamities] has reached you and those of you who it has not reached, it will soon reach you, Allāh bless you.

Until today, they are the Salafīs and we are the harsh ones. Meaning, they do all these things that the People of Bid'ah have not done: the false principles, Allāh bless you; by Allāh the People of Bid'ah haven't done such things. Despite this, they are the Salafīs and we are the harsh ones. Look at these judgements, these dangerous positions, Allāh bless you. Be aware and follow the Manhaj of the Salaf; whoever says what is wrong and false, take him to account for his falsehood. And whoever says what is right and true, you are obliged to support him.

وَتَعَاوَنُوا عَلَى الْبِرِّ وَالتَّقْوَىٰ ۖ وَلَا تَعَاوَنُوا عَلَى الْإِثْمِ وَالْعُدْوَانِ

Al-Mâ'idah: 2

Cooperate with each other to do what is good and righteous and do not cooperate in sin and transgression.

The Salaf used to support the truth, [and this continued] up to the time of Ibn Bâz and Ibn ‘Uthaymîn and others, they all used to support the truth. After these [scholars] went, some of the Shaykhs were tried, Allâh bless you, every time they raised their heads with a word of truth, these [opponents] broke their heads. Every time they raised their heads with a word of truth, they belittled them whilst supporting these rebellious deviants, and deeming them to be Salafîs, and [calling] us the extremists. Abul-Hasan describes us as being extremists, why? Because we criticize Sayed Quṭb, we criticize the Ikhwân, we criticize Al-Tablîgh, and we criticize [other] People of Bid’ah. He calls us extremists yet by Allâh deems the socialists, Baathists and Nâsirîs to be Muslims, and he deems Al-Tablîgh and the Ikhwân – to this very day – to be from Ahl Al-Sunnah, while he knows that the scholars of the Sunnah – at the head of them Ibn Bâz and Al-Albânî - have ruled that these two sects: the Ikhwân and Al-Tablîgh are not from Ahl Al-Sunnah and that they are from the People of Bid’ah, and that they are from the doomed sects. But he opposes the scholars obstinately to this very day, even if they are headed by Ibn Bâz and Al-Albânî, Allâh bless you. He says they are from Ahl Al-Sunnah, and he deems the entire Islamic populace to be – he says ‘the vast majority of the Ummah’ are all Salafîs. So Al-Tablîgh and Ikhwân are Ahl Al-Sunnah, and Rabî’ and those with him are extremists and this and that ... And when he comes to the Râfidah he is so well mannered, and when he comes to the other People of Bid’ah likewise. And to this day, he is the Salafî and we are the extremists.

Understand these plots and these games and these tricks. How long was I patient with him? I was patient with him for seven years or more. Then I dealt with him diplomatically in debating him privately, whilst he was inciting [others] and declaring war. He declared war on the scholars of Yemen and ditched them all, and dissociated himself from them and from the Salafîs. He announced his separation, they said, ‘recant.’ He said, ‘never.’ ... [I ask you] by Allâh, brothers; a person who is fair, can he respect this man? A person who is fair, who is a true Salafî, can he respect this man? ...

Be men; if you are Salafîs, study the Manhaj of the Salaf from its original sources and adhere to it strictly and tightly, and do not fear the blame of the blamers if you speak sincerely for Allâh. If your father or your brother deviates, the closest person to you, explain the reality of [the deviation] he has. This is the meaning of being sincere (naṣiḥah) to Allâh.

The religion is naṣiḥah to Allâh, His Book, His Messenger, and to the leaders of the Muslims and the Muslim public.

Saḥiḥ Muslim

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا كُونُوا قَوَّامِينَ بِٱلْقِسْطِ شُهَدَآءَ لِلّٰهِ وَلَوْ عَلَىٰٓ أَنفُسِكُمْ ؕ أَوِ ٱلْوَالِدَيْنِ وَٱلْأَقْرَبِينَ

Al-Nisâ`: 135

O you who believe! Be just and fair and witnesses for Allâh, even against yourselves, your parents or your closest kin.

Where are these verses and narrations? Where are those who support those [who refute falsehood]? Where are these texts? Where is the Manhaj of the Salaf? Where is the Manhaj of the Imâms ... Ibn Bâz and others, where is it?

Allâh bless you, I know that there is a spreading of trials and tribulations, there is a spreading of Bid'ah and misguidance, and [people] are being fooled and cheated. So let no one fool you. Whoever errs – if Ibn Taymîyah erred, if Ibn Bâz erred – by Allâh we would refute his error. This is our way by Allâh other than whom none deserves worship. I went to Shaykh Ibn Bâz. Shaykh Ibn Bâz said, "I will advise [Shaykh Rabî]." I went to him and said, "It has reached me that you want to advise me." He replied, "Indeed." I said, "What is your advice?" He replied, "My advice is: if [Muḥammad] Ibn Ibrâhîm (the former Mufti of Saudi Arabia and teacher of Shaykh Ibn Bâz) or Ibn Bâz errs, refute them." By Allâh other than whom none deserves worship.

In any of his lectures or meetings, if a person said one wrong word, Ibn Bâz would refute it. Everyone knows this; all the early students of the [Islamic] University know this about Shaykh Ibn Bâz. He would never leave an error without refuting (correcting) it. A mistake made in a newspaper, magazine, a site, anywhere, Ibn Bâz would not remain silent, he would refute it, Allâh bless you. And he would encourage the Salafis to refute and would support them.

This is the Manhaj of the Salaf. I ask Allâh to make us and you all firm upon it, and to provide us true knowledge and insight of the religion, verily our Lord is the one who hears and answers the prayers. And may Allâh's praise and peace be upon our Prophet Muḥammad, and upon his Family and Companions.

Translated by Abû 'Abdillâh Owais Al-Hâshimî

Source (Arabic recording):

http://www.4shared.com/audio/sCf59oGP/28_10_31.html

Transcribed at: <http://www.sahab.net/forums/showthread.php?t=382353>

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ⁱ This translation is from a transcript of the question and answers, '...' denotes where the audio is not clear and some words are missing, according to the transcript. One or two amendments have been made to the first part of the translation, which was put out on some mailing lists. This document supersedes that first part. – Translator